1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

prevalence among the Sinhalese of magic having for its object the production of disease and death. Even the Henebedda Veddas, who have adopted a number of Sinhalese charms against animals, do not believe in this form of magic. The presence of a woman with wasting of both legs and contracture, the result of a long-standing ulcerative process of obscure origin which developed spontaneously, enabled this to be tested.

Although we discussed this woman's condition with a number of Veddas it was only once suggested, and then very doubtfully, that it might have been due to Sinhalese *kuniyam* magic[1], and it was clear that to the community generally this woman's disease was simply an accident, the origin of which they did not understand and did not trouble about.

Though Veddas, and especially Vedda women, are extremely shy there is no belief in the evil eye, or in the danger of being "overlooked."

Charms protective against Animals.

The bear is the only animal that the Veddas really fear, and there is no doubt that a number of Veddas and jungle-dwelling Sinhalese are mauled each year, indeed, at least one man in each community that we visited bore the marks of the bear's paws. Bear's flesh is not eaten and we doubt if Veddas ever voluntarily attack a bear, though there is no doubt that they sometimes kill one that has attacked them. Hence, the bear is called the "enemy" and his name is seldom mentioned nor is he represented among the rock paintings at Pihilegodagalge although the leopard, who steals the Vedda dogs and is hated in consequence, is represented. When questioned on the subject our male informants said nothing, but a number of women looked surprised and one said quite decidedly that no one would paint a bear. The words used in speaking of the bear are of

[1] That the *kuniyam* idea was foreign to the one Vedda who suggested it, was proved by the results of further questioning, when our informant gave an outline of one of the commonest Sinhalese beliefs as to the method of preparation and action of *kuniyam* charms. The reference to *kuniyam* in one of the "Vedda charms" published by Mr De Zoysa (*Journal Ceylon Branch R. A. S.*, Vol. VII, 1881, p. 103), cannot be taken to invalidate our conclusions, for many of these charms show undoubted Sinhalese influence.

CHAPTER XI

ARTS AND CRAFTS

517 It is not our purpose in this short chapter to attempt to describe systematically the crafts of the Veddas, this has already been done by the Sarasins and we shall, therefore, limit ourselves to touching on matters which especially interested us, or concerning which we have unrecorded information.

The arts and crafts of the Veddas are of the simplest nature, their belongings are few, and there is no certain attempt at ornamentation on any of these. Even personal adornment is so lacking that it may be disregarded. The highest artistic attainments of the Veddas seem to be their songs and invocations, and these, with their ceremonial dances, in which they may be said to have specialised, seem to have absorbed all that part of their mental energy which remains after providing for their daily necessities. There is no reason to believe that their artistic development was ever any higher than it is at the present day, when the only form of decorative art in which they indulge for its own sake, is rude drawing on rocks which we shall now describe[1].

ROCK DRAWINGS.

532 Figs. 1 and 2 of Plate LVI show rock drawings made by the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya at Pihilegodagalge and another cave near it. Since our return we have ascertained that other Veddas

[1] It is possible that a few individuals are pleased by simple geometrical patterns. There are traces of ornamentation on two of the pots shown in Plate LXII although this had avowedly been copied from foreign pots.

[177]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

make drawings[1], but unfortunately we did not pay attention to this matter until we had seen Pihilegodagalge. 532

This was due to the frequent occurrence of rough drawings and scribblings made by Tamil gall-nut collectors in some of the rock-shelters sometimes used by the Henebedda Veddas. The Veddas obviously had nothing to do with these, and they denied that they were responsible for the only other drawings that we saw, namely those of an elephant and two men in Punchikiri-ammagalge.

Probably drawings are made in many of the sloping rock-shelters and are habitually washed away by the monsoon. Indeed this view was put forward by the men of the Sitala Wanniya group who stated that all Veddas could make pictures.

Pihilegodagalge was, however, specially well situated for the preservation of the drawings, and the pictures on the back wall of the cave were never touched by rain. The drawings were usually made by women, who said they did them when they were waiting for the men to return from hunting, apparently merely to amuse themselves. We feel confident that no magical import attaches to these pictures, the usual subjects of which are men and women, various animals and the hide vessel *maludema* (Sin. *kangotu*) in which honey is collected. Ashes were mixed with a little saliva in the palm of the hand and streaked on to the rock with the forefinger of the right hand, the spots of the leopard being put in with a charcoal paste prepared in the same manner. [386]

Plate LVI, fig. 1 shows on the right a *maludema*, a vessel made of deer's hide in which rock-honey is collected. The radiating lines which make this drawing appear like the sun's disc, represent handles made of loops of creeper, while the spots inside indicate the honey. The *maludema* (a photograph of which is given in Plate LXV) is a favourite subject and occurs in a number of rock paintings. Below the *maludema* on the right is a dog and below this a leopard is represented. On the

[1] Mr H. C. P. Bell has written to us that he has seen drawings in the rock-shelters used a few years ago by the Veddas of Tamankaduwa, and Mr Alfred Clark formerly of the Woods and Forests Department has also observed them.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

532 left the two long figures which might be taken for centipedes really portray the big monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*), the vertical lines representing ribs.

Plate LVI, fig. 2 shows on the right a leopard and dogs while on the left men and women are seen. This illustration does not show very clearly the difference between men and women which was pointed out to us. Lines pointing upwards were drawn from the heads of women to show that their hair was tied in a knot. This distinction is very difficult to understand. The hair of both men and women is equally unkempt, the women certainly tie theirs into a knot behind, but this is quite frequently done by men also as a matter of convenience; and to the uninitiated these lines radiating from the head rather give the appearance of loose hair than the reverse.

The drawings in Plate LVII, fig. 1 are the work of a man, the grandfather of Handuna, the leader of the group. He is considered to have been an exceptionally good draughtsman. He was once obliged to go to Batticaloa the official headquarters of the province, the reason was difficult to follow, but it appeared to have been connected with a murder which had taken place. On his return to the cave he made a picture of what had impressed him most, namely, "the white man on horseback." Two representations of this are seen on the left, on the right there is a group of men and women surrounding a man who holds a bow above his head. The lower horizontal line represents the bow while the upper is the string and the vertical line the arrow. The dots scattered around the arrow represent its feathers.

Plate LVII, fig. 2 represents a number of drawings of *mala-dema* in a cave near Sitala Wanniya.

Plates LVIII to LXI are photographs of pictures made for us on brown paper by several members of the Sitala Wanniya community. The upper part of Plate LVIII shows a leopard attacking a dog, this was made by Vela, below it is a row of men drawn by the wife of Handuna. On Plate LIX a *mala-dema* is depicted on the left, next on the right are three women, two drawn horizontally and the third vertically, but upside down; in all of them the body has been carried down too far,

Plate LVI

●532

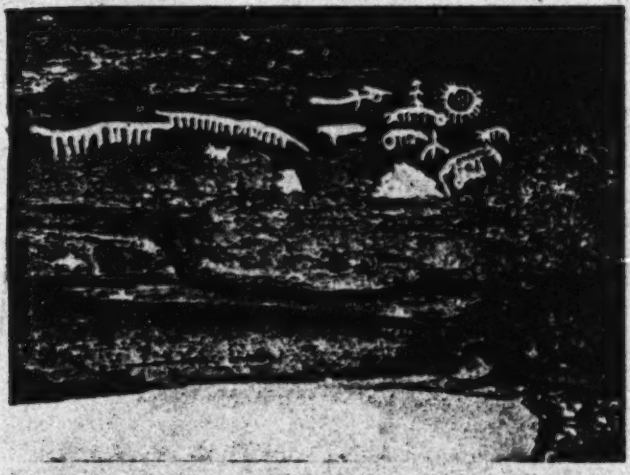

Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

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Fig. 2. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

[facing p. 32]

Plate LVII

●532

Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

Fig. 2. Rock drawings of *hunuvetu* in Gamakandagalge cave

[facing p. 320 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●532

Plate LVIII

Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

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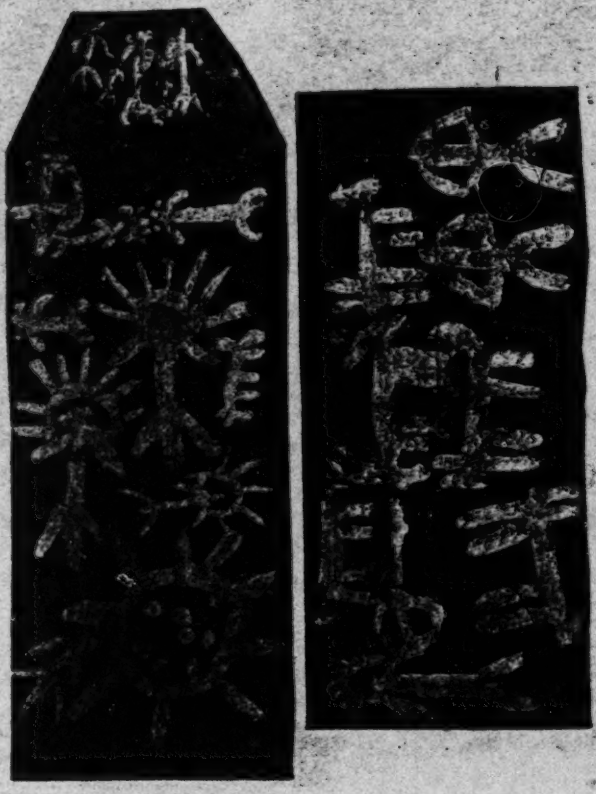
Plate LIX



Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 d]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

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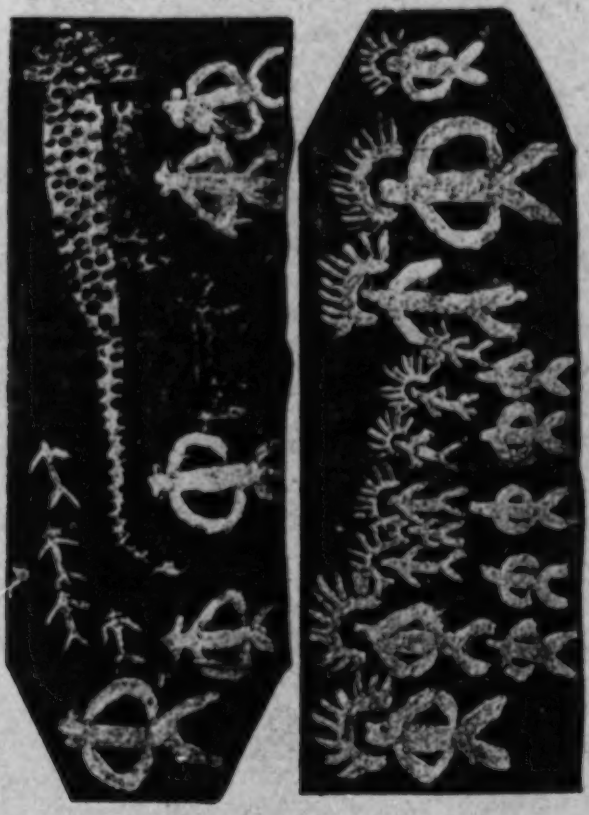
Plate LX



Vedda drawings

[-facing p 320 e]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

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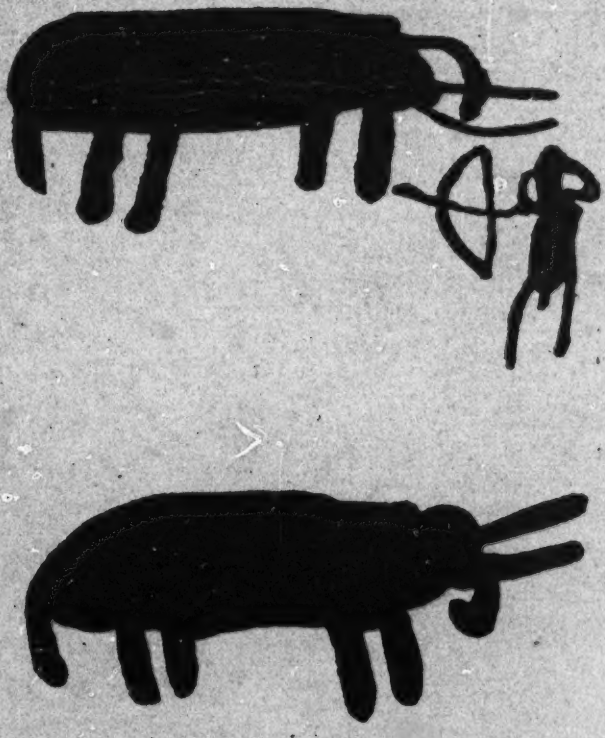

Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 f]

1-Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to project downwards between the legs: the radiating lines above the head were said to represent hair. In the lower part of the photograph in the centre is a dog. The next three figures represent a bow and arrow, a woman and a man, looking at them from above to below. On the right is a group of men. The lower figure in this plate shows a sambar deer in the centre and four dogs, two men and a woman. Plate LX shows a leopard, a dog and several men and women. 532

The figures of elephants and a man with a bow and arrow on Plate LXI were drawn on grey millboard and were so faint that it was necessary to blacken them before reproduction. The carelessness with which the trunk is put in is noteworthy.

The only other occasions on which we saw pigments used were at the Bambura Yaka and Rahu Yaka ceremonies described in Chapter IX, black and yellowish-brown marks being made on the properties prepared. The black marks were made with charcoal paste, the brownish marks with turmeric. [386]

PANTOMIME.

The only other art practised by the Veddas is that of pantomime from which they undoubtedly derive real pleasure. Within the limits of their daily experience they are good actors, and will most faithfully portray their own method of doing things. The zest with which a number of Henebedda Veddas spontaneously prepared the properties for a pantomimic exhibition of honey-gathering, and then enacted the scene at Bendiyagalge caves, was very striking and has been referred to in Chapter IV. 536

Another piece of pantomime which we never saw enacted spontaneously but which was performed at our request, was the stalking of game. Directly the object to be "stalked" had been indicated, the stalker fixed his eyes on it, and then approached noiselessly and warily, with body bent and head forward, every muscle ready for instant action, till within a few paces of the object when he would straighten his body and return to the rest of the party at his usual easy pace.